

## Greece Lifts Press Censor But Editors Are Disgruntled

By DAVID BURK

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Athens — Newspapers are no longer censored in Greece, but most publishers and editors are openly charging that they have less freedom now than under censorship.

Only three of Athens' 10 newspapers are solidly pro-regime—Eleftheros Kosmos (Free World) and two founded by the regime, Nea Politia (New State) and its two-month-old afternoon paper, Ta Simerina (Today). One irony is that these three are among those newspapers with the smallest circulation.

The most defiant daily and afternoon journals have the largest sales, with circulation increasing in direct ratio to their defiance. Ethnos (The State), which previously had been foundering financially, suddenly discovered itself in the black recently as news items and editorials attacking the regime sent circulation spiraling.

### What Will Tasca Do?

Observers here, who have been watching the Ethnos campaign, see its sudden frenzy of criticism as its dying gasps. But few persons understand the devious twists of domestic politics and the observers could be wrong.

Ethnos is thought to have decided that the regime will not openly apply any of the measures of the new press law that could drag editors and publishers through the courts, fine them, imprison them, and even shut the paper.

Two reasons why Ethnos and some of its fellows hold this view:

Greece, distressed at having been forced to quit the Council of Europe last December, knows she is being watched; and the regime is still uncertain what the new U. S. ambassador, Henry J. Tasca, will recommend to President Nixon as a basis for Washington policy toward Greece.

American diplomatic sources say Tasca is doing a great deal of listening and very little talking. This has made Tasca's presence here almost as upsetting for the regime as the full year prior to his arrival when the post of ambassador stayed empty. The Athens regime, notably friendless, would like the assurance it has the Washington support of its opponents credit it with.

### Other Means Used

Consequently, the regime is believed to be far from anxious to take any drastic measures against critical editors and publishers that would attract attention.

The editors and publishers, meanwhile, are charging that the regime has been using other — often irregular — means to muzzle an unfriendly press.

The Athens News, one of the city's two English-language dailies, recently joined some of its Greek colleagues in informing readers that it will ignore the two state-run orchestras, and the opera and theater companies.

Behind this lies the regime's decision to withhold all state advertising from any journal failing to toe the line.

The afternoon Akropolis, answering a regime-inspired denial, bluntly state that "during all of 1969 Akropolis received no government advertising. This advertising was once worth millions of drachma."

Ethnos and at least three other Greek dailies have for weeks been charging in print that the authorities are restricting their sales by having police threaten vendors. These papers say that as a result vendors favor pro-regime papers and keep others out of sight.

### Government Denies It

Ethnos demanded on page one that Premier George Papadopoulos "either stop restricting circulation or reimpose censorship." The announcement, challenging the regime's "sincerity and courage," said, "There are areas of Greece where the people believe we have ceased publication."

In another incident Ethnos, which was serializing a survey on the Greek press by the International Press Institute, said copies were seized by police from newsstands for bannerizing its story: "The Press in Greece is in Danger." But tens of thousands of copies had already been sold.

The regime itself denies all these charges. An official announcement blamed "professional international and local slanderers" for accusations that the Greek press is not entirely free since promulgation of the

The announcement offered the soaring circulation figures of Ethnos in support of its case—an argument rejected here both by publishers and the diplomatic corps.